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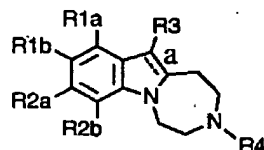
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**Specification**

Please replace the paragraph of formula I on page 3, line 17 to page 5, line 24 with the following paragraph:

- 5 A compound of formula I:

**I**

where a is a single bond or double bond, and where

R1a, R1b, R2a and R2b are each independently

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(a) H, Cl, Br, I, F, CN, CF<sub>3</sub>, OCF<sub>3</sub>, OR<sub>5</sub>, CONR<sub>5</sub>R<sub>6</sub>, COR<sub>5</sub>, CO[[2]]<sub>2</sub>R<sub>5</sub>, Y(CH<sub>2</sub>)<sub>m</sub>XR<sub>5</sub> or YC(O)(CH<sub>2</sub>)<sub>m</sub>XR<sub>5</sub>, where m = 0-3, Y = CH<sub>2</sub>, S, O, or NR<sub>6</sub>, X = CH<sub>2</sub>, S, O, NR<sub>6</sub>;

- 15 (b) (CH[[2]]<sub>2</sub>)<sub>p</sub>Ar where p = 0-3 and Ar is aryl or heteroaryl optionally substituted with one or more of the following: H, halogen, CN, NO<sub>2</sub>, OR<sub>7</sub>, CF<sub>3</sub>, OCF<sub>3</sub>, SR<sub>7</sub>, SO<sub>2</sub>R<sub>7</sub>, SO<sub>2</sub>NR<sub>7</sub>R<sub>8</sub>, NR<sub>7</sub>R<sub>8</sub>, CONR<sub>7</sub>R<sub>8</sub>, NR<sub>7</sub>COR<sub>8</sub>, NR<sub>7</sub>CONR<sub>8</sub>R<sub>9</sub>, CO<sub>2</sub>R<sub>7</sub>, COR<sub>7</sub>, or R<sub>7</sub>; or

- 20 (c) linear or branched C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> alkyl, linear or branched C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> alkenyl, linear or branched C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> alkynyl, C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> cycloalkyl, C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> cycloalkenyl, or C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> cycloalkynyl; wherein any of these groups may be optionally substituted with one or more of the following: halogen, CN, NO<sub>2</sub>, COR<sub>7</sub>, OR<sub>7</sub>, NR<sub>7</sub>R<sub>8</sub>, SR<sub>7</sub>, CO[[2]]<sub>2</sub>R<sub>7</sub>, CONR<sub>7</sub>R<sub>8</sub> or NR<sub>7</sub>COR<sub>8</sub>; and where

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R<sub>3</sub> is

(a) H, Cl, Br, I, F, CN, CF<sub>3</sub>, OCF<sub>3</sub>, alkyl, Ar, OR<sub>5</sub>, SR<sub>5</sub>, CHO, CONR<sub>5</sub>R<sub>6</sub>, COR<sub>5</sub>, CO[[2]]<sub>2</sub>R<sub>5</sub>, (Y)<sub>o</sub>(CH[[2]]<sub>2</sub>)<sub>n</sub>XR<sub>5</sub>, C(O)C(O)XR<sub>5</sub>, (Y)<sub>o</sub>(CH<sub>2</sub>)<sub>n</sub>C(O)XR<sub>5</sub>,

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(Y)<sub>o</sub>(CH<sub>2</sub>)<sub>n</sub>N(R6)C(O)OR5, (Y)<sub>o</sub>(CH<sub>2</sub>)<sub>n</sub>N(R6)C(O)NR5R6 where o = 0 or 1, n = 0-3, X = CH<sub>2</sub>, S, O, or NR6 and Y = CH<sub>2</sub>, S, O or NR6, where Ar is aryl or heteroaryl optionally substituted with one or more of the following: H, halogen, CN, NO<sub>2</sub>, OR7, CF<sub>3</sub>, OCF<sub>3</sub>, SR7, SO<sub>2</sub>R7, SO<sub>2</sub>NR7R8, NR7R8, CONR7R8, NR7COR8, NR7CONR8R9, CO<sub>2</sub>R7, COR7, or R7; or

(b) linear or branched C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> alkyl, linear or branched C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> alkenyl, linear or branched C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> alkynyl, C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> cycloalkyl, C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> cycloalkenyl, or C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> cycloalkynyl; wherein any of these groups may be optionally substituted with one or more of the following: halogen, CN, NO<sub>2</sub>, COR10, OR10, NR10R8, SR10, CO<sub>2</sub>R10, CONR10R8 or NR10COR8; and where

R4, R5 and R6 are each independently

(a) H, linear or branched C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> alkyl, linear or branched C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> alkenyl, linear or branched C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> alkynyl, C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> cycloalkyl, C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> cycloalkenyl, or C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> cycloalkynyl; wherein any of these groups other than H may be optionally substituted with one or more of the following: halogen, CN, NO<sub>2</sub>, COR10, OR10, NR10R11, SR10, CO<sub>2</sub>R10, CONR10R11 or NR10COR11; or where R5 and R6 are linked to form a 3 to 8 member ring; or

(b) (CH<sub>2</sub>)<sub>p</sub>Ar where p = 0-3 and Ar is aryl or heteroaryl optionally substituted with one or more of the following: H, halogen, CN, NO<sub>2</sub>, OR7, CF<sub>3</sub>, OCF<sub>3</sub>, SR7, SO<sub>2</sub>R7, SO<sub>2</sub>NR7R8, NR7R8, CONR7R8, NR7COR8, NR7CONR8R9, CO<sub>2</sub>R7, COR7, or R7; and where

R7, R8, and R9 are each independently

(a) H, linear or branched C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> alkyl, linear or branched C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> alkenyl, linear or branched C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> alkynyl, C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> cycloalkyl, C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> cycloalkenyl, or C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> cycloalkynyl groups, wherein any of these groups other than H may be optionally substituted with halogen, CN, NO<sub>2</sub>, COR10, OR10, NR10R11, SR10, CO<sub>2</sub>R10, CONR10R11, NR10COR11, NR10CONR11R12, or where R7, R8, or R9 are linked to form a ring;

OR

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(b)  $(\text{CH}[[2]]_2)_p\text{Ar}$  where  $p = 0-3$  and Ar is aryl or heteroaryl optionally substituted with one or more of the following: H, halogen, CN,  $\text{NO}_2$ , OR10,  $\text{CF}_3$ ,  $\text{OCF}_3$ , SR10,  $\text{SO}_2\text{R}_{10}$ ,  $\text{SO}_2\text{NR}_{10}\text{R}_{11}$ ,  $\text{NR}_{10}\text{R}_{11}$ ,  $\text{CONR}_{10}\text{R}_{11}$ ,  $\text{NR}_{10}\text{COR}_{11}$ ,  $\text{NR}_{10}\text{CONR}_{11}\text{R}_{12}$ ,  
5  $\text{CO}_2\text{R}_{10}$ ,  $\text{COR}_{10}$ , or  $\text{R}_{10}$ ; and where

R10, R11 and R12 are each independently H, linear or branched  $\text{C}_1\text{-C}_8$  alkyl, linear or branched  $\text{C}_2\text{-C}_8$  alkenyl, linear or branched  $\text{C}_2\text{-C}_8$  alkynyl,  $\text{C}_3\text{-C}_8$  cycloalkyl,  $\text{C}_3\text{-C}_8$  cycloalkenyl, or  $\text{C}_3\text{-C}_8$  cycloalkynyl;

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or a stereoisomer or pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

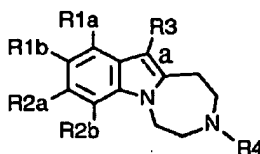
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Please replace the paragraph of formula I on page 9, line 1 to page 11, line 27 with the following paragraph:

A compound of formula I:



I

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where a is a single bond or double bond, and where

R1a, R1b, R2a and R2b are each independently

- 10 (a) H, Cl, Br, I, F, CN, CF<sub>3</sub>, OCF<sub>3</sub>, OR<sub>5</sub>, CONR<sub>5</sub>R<sub>6</sub>, COR<sub>5</sub>, CO[[2]]<sub>2</sub>R<sub>5</sub>, Y(CH<sub>2</sub>)<sub>m</sub>XR<sub>5</sub> or YC(O)(CH<sub>2</sub>)<sub>m</sub>XR<sub>5</sub>, where m = 0-3, Y = CH<sub>2</sub>, S, O, or NR<sub>6</sub>, X = CH<sub>2</sub>, S, O, NR<sub>6</sub>;
- (b) (CH[[2]]<sub>2</sub>)<sub>p</sub>Ar where p = 0-3 and Ar is aryl or heteroaryl optionally substituted
- 15 with one or more of the following: H, halogen, CN, NO<sub>2</sub>, OR<sub>7</sub>, CF<sub>3</sub>, OCF<sub>3</sub>, SR<sub>7</sub>, SO<sub>2</sub>R<sub>7</sub>, SO<sub>2</sub>NR<sub>7</sub>R<sub>8</sub>, NR<sub>7</sub>R<sub>8</sub>, CONR<sub>7</sub>R<sub>8</sub>, NR<sub>7</sub>COR<sub>8</sub>, NR<sub>7</sub>CONR<sub>8</sub>R<sub>9</sub>, CO<sub>2</sub>R<sub>7</sub>, COR<sub>7</sub>, or R<sub>7</sub>; or
- (c) linear or branched C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> alkyl, linear or branched C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> alkenyl, linear or
- 20 branched C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> alkynyl, C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> cycloalkyl, C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> cycloalkenyl, or C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> cycloalkynyl; wherein any of these groups may be optionally substituted with one or more of the following: halogen, CN, NO<sub>2</sub>, COR<sub>7</sub>, OR<sub>7</sub>, NR<sub>7</sub>R<sub>8</sub>, SR<sub>7</sub>, CO[[2]]<sub>2</sub>R<sub>7</sub>, CONR<sub>7</sub>R<sub>8</sub> or NR<sub>7</sub>COR<sub>8</sub>; and where
- 25 R<sub>3</sub> is
- (a) H, Cl, Br, I, F, CN, CF<sub>3</sub>, OCF<sub>3</sub>, alkyl, Ar, OR<sub>5</sub>, SR<sub>5</sub>, CHO, CONR<sub>5</sub>R<sub>6</sub>, COR<sub>5</sub>, CO[[2]]<sub>2</sub>R<sub>5</sub>, (Y)<sub>o</sub>(CH[[2]]<sub>2</sub>)<sub>n</sub>XR<sub>5</sub>, C(O)C(O)XR<sub>5</sub>, (Y)<sub>o</sub>(CH<sub>2</sub>)<sub>n</sub>C(O)XR<sub>5</sub>, C(O)(CH[[2]]<sub>2</sub>)<sub>n</sub>XR<sub>5</sub>, (Y)<sub>o</sub>(CH[[2]]<sub>2</sub>)<sub>n</sub>N(R<sub>6</sub>)C(O)R<sub>5</sub>, (Y)<sub>o</sub>(CH[[2]]<sub>2</sub>)<sub>n</sub>N(R<sub>6</sub>)S(O)<sub>2</sub>R<sub>5</sub>,
- 30 (Y)<sub>o</sub>(CH[[2]]<sub>2</sub>)<sub>n</sub>N(R<sub>6</sub>)C(O)OR<sub>5</sub>, (Y)<sub>o</sub>(CH[[2]]<sub>2</sub>)<sub>n</sub>N(R<sub>6</sub>)C(O)NR<sub>5</sub>R<sub>6</sub> where o = 0 or 1

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n = 0-3, X = CH<sub>2</sub>, S, O, or NR<sub>6</sub> and Y=CH<sub>2</sub>, S, O or NR<sub>6</sub>, where Ar is aryl or heteroaryl optionally substituted with one or more of the following: H, halogen, CN, NO<sub>2</sub>, OR<sub>7</sub>, CF<sub>3</sub>, OCF<sub>3</sub>, SR<sub>7</sub>, SO<sub>2</sub>R<sub>7</sub>, SO<sub>2</sub>NR<sub>7</sub>R<sub>8</sub>, NR<sub>7</sub>R<sub>8</sub>, CONR<sub>7</sub>R<sub>8</sub>, NR<sub>7</sub>COR<sub>8</sub>, NR<sub>7</sub>CONR<sub>8</sub>R<sub>9</sub>, CO<sub>2</sub>R<sub>7</sub>, COR<sub>7</sub>, or R<sub>7</sub>; or

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(b) linear or branched C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> alkyl, linear or branched C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> alkenyl, linear or branched C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> alkynyl, C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> cycloalkyl, C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> cycloalkenyl, or C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> cycloalkynyl; wherein any of these groups may be optionally substituted with one or more of the following: halogen, CN, NO<sub>2</sub>, COR<sub>10</sub>, OR<sub>10</sub>, NR<sub>10</sub>R<sub>8</sub>, SR<sub>10</sub>, CO[[2]]<sub>2</sub>R<sub>10</sub>,

10 CONR<sub>10</sub>R<sub>8</sub> or NR<sub>10</sub>COR<sub>8</sub>; and where

R<sub>4</sub>, R<sub>5</sub> and R<sub>6</sub> are each independently

(a) H, linear or branched C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> alkyl, linear or branched C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> alkenyl, linear or branched C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> alkynyl, C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> cycloalkyl, C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> cycloalkenyl, or C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> cycloalkynyl; wherein any of these groups other than H may be optionally substituted with one or more of the following: halogen, CN, NO<sub>2</sub>, COR<sub>10</sub>, OR<sub>10</sub>, NR<sub>10</sub>R<sub>11</sub>, SR<sub>10</sub>, CO[[2]]<sub>2</sub>R<sub>10</sub>, CONR<sub>10</sub>R<sub>11</sub> or NR<sub>10</sub>COR<sub>11</sub>; or where R<sub>5</sub> and R<sub>6</sub> are linked to form a 3 to 8 member ring; or

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(b) (CH<sub>2</sub>)<sub>p</sub>Ar where p = 0-3 and Ar is aryl or heteroaryl optionally substituted with one or more of the following: H, halogen, CN, NO<sub>2</sub>, OR<sub>7</sub>, CF<sub>3</sub>, OCF<sub>3</sub>, SR<sub>7</sub>, SO<sub>2</sub>R<sub>7</sub>, SO<sub>2</sub>NR<sub>7</sub>R<sub>8</sub>, NR<sub>7</sub>R<sub>8</sub>, CONR<sub>7</sub>R<sub>8</sub>, NR<sub>7</sub>COR<sub>8</sub>, NR<sub>7</sub>CONR<sub>8</sub>R<sub>9</sub>, CO<sub>2</sub>R<sub>7</sub>, COR<sub>7</sub>, or R<sub>7</sub>; and where

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R<sub>7</sub>, R<sub>8</sub>, and R<sub>9</sub> are each independently

(a) H, linear or branched C<sub>1</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> alkyl, linear or branched C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> alkenyl, linear or branched C<sub>2</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> alkynyl, C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> cycloalkyl, C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> cycloalkenyl, or C<sub>3</sub>-C<sub>8</sub> cycloalkynyl groups, wherein any of these groups other than H may be optionally substituted with halogen, CN, NO<sub>2</sub>, COR<sub>10</sub>, OR<sub>10</sub>, NR<sub>10</sub>R<sub>11</sub>, SR<sub>10</sub>, CO[[2]]<sub>2</sub>R<sub>10</sub>, CONR<sub>10</sub>R<sub>11</sub>, NR<sub>10</sub>COR<sub>11</sub>, NR<sub>10</sub>CONR<sub>11</sub>R<sub>12</sub>, or where R<sub>7</sub>, R<sub>8</sub>, or R<sub>9</sub> are linked to form a ring; or

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(b)  $(\text{CH}[[2]]_2)_p\text{Ar}$  where  $p = 0-3$  and Ar is aryl or heteroaryl optionally substituted with one or more of the following: H, halogen, CN,  $\text{NO}_2$ , OR10,  $\text{CF}_3$ ,  $\text{OCF}_3$ , SR10,  $\text{SO}_2\text{R10}$ ,  $\text{SO}_2\text{NR10R11}$ , NR10R11, CONR10R11, NR10COR11, NR10CONR11R12,  $\text{CO}_2\text{R10}$ , COR10, or R10; and where

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R10, R11 and R12 are each independently H, linear or branched  $\text{C}_1\text{-C}_8$  alkyl, linear or branched  $\text{C}_2\text{-C}_8$  alkenyl, linear or branched  $\text{C}_2\text{-C}_8$  alkynyl,  $\text{C}_3\text{-C}_8$  cycloalkyl,  $\text{C}_3\text{-C}_8$  cycloalkenyl, or  $\text{C}_3\text{-C}_8$  cycloalkynyl;

10 or a stereoisomer or pharmaceutically acceptable salt thereof.

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